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## Senate

The Senate met at 12 noon and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Sovereign God, Your kingdom cannot be shaken, for You are King of kings and Lord of lords. Thank You for inviting us to ask and receive, to seek and find, and to knock for doors to open. Lord, forgive us when we have forfeited Your blessings because of our failure to ask.

Today, empower our Senators to seek Your wisdom and guidance. May they not depend only on their gifts and abilities, but remember that without Your involvement they labor in vain. May they strive to be Your ambassadors of renewal and reconciliation. Steady their hands to grasp freedom's torch and illuminate the darkness of our Nation and world.

We pray in Your mighty Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GRASSLEY). The majority leader is recognized.

### A BALANCED BUDGET

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, we begin this week by remembering a failed idea from the past—ObamaCare—and we will end by pass-

ing balanced budget legislation about the future.

Five years ago today, a partisan ObamaCare bill was signed into law over the objections of the American people. It was rushed through in defiance of the experts who warned it would result in higher costs, fewer choices, and broken promises for the middle class. And, tragically, that is just what we have seen.

Millions of Americans lost health plans they were promised they could keep, premiums spiked, deductibles skyrocketed, tax time became even more of a burden, and often a costlier one as well, and for too many, family doctors and trusted hospitals fell out of network.

All we have to do is listen to letters such as Karen's from Louisville to know that Americans deserve better than what ObamaCare has given them.

Karen was paying \$325 a month for her health insurance. But now, she says her premium has spiked to almost \$550 a month with a deductible well in excess of \$6,000. "I cannot afford this," Karen wrote, "but I do not have a choice. It scares me to think what will happen if I do get sick."

That is Karen's story, and it is hardly unique.

Every Member in this body should be striving for something better—something better—than the pain of ObamaCare. And we can. By passing a balanced budget that is about the future, we can leave ObamaCare's higher costs and broken promises where they belong—in the past—and start fresh with real health reform. That is just one of the many reasons for Senators who support the balanced budget now before us. It is a budget that recognizes serious fiscal and economic challenges that are facing our country and works to address them in a commonsense way.

Americans know that Washington can't tax away the challenges confronting us, and Americans know

Washington can't ignore away the problems confronting us, either. Americans also know that every dollar spent on interest for the growing national debt is essentially wasted. Every dollar spent on interest is one less dollar for Social Security or for helping those who truly need it or for tax relief.

That is why the balanced budget before us is premised on a simple truth—that Washington has a spending problem, not a revenue problem. I know this can be hard for some to acknowledge, but politicians have a duty to the American people to simply admit it. They owe it to the American people to explain why the kind of budget blueprints we have seen from the White House are just so totally unserious. President Obama's budgets skip the tough choices, keep spending more money we don't have, contain massive tax increases, and never balance—ever. They never balance—ever.

Contrast that to the budget before the Senate today. It balances, it does so without raising taxes, and it is the result of open and transparent committee work led by Chairman MIKE ENZI.

This budget is another example of the new Senate getting back to work for the American people. It is another example of the new Senate moving past failed ideas from the past, such as ObamaCare, and positioning America for the future instead.

This balanced budget is all about growing an economy that can work better for the middle class of today and leaving a more prosperous future to the middle class of tomorrow. It will also provide the procedural tools, via the budget reconciliation process, to bring an end to the nightmare of ObamaCare. That is something all of us should want.

So since our friends across the aisle have decided not to offer a budget of their own, I would invite them to join us—to join us in supporting the growth-oriented and balanced budget that is before us now.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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